

LAWYER MORRIS IN A NEW ROLE

The Chicago Law Giver Overestimates His Greatness.

An Intelligent Washington Audience Not Moved by a Pessimist—Gov. Pinchback and Others Defend the Great Tuskegee Wizard—Notes.

The question is often asked why when a colored man accomplishes something commendable his own people are rabid in their attempts to cripple his usefulness, destroy his influence and wreck his work. Let him attain any measurement of success and his bitterest critics and opponents are found among his own race. Instead of aiding, encouraging and assisting him they assail, denounce and discourage his laudable ambition to rise and help others to rise above the common level.

Is it due to envy and jealousy, or is it the result of the contentious character of the blood that goes to make up a hyphenated people? Aside from the pure blacks we can boast of the blood of nearly every nationality, and the antipathy that exists among foreigners, seems intensified in this blended blood. We are record breakers as iconoclasts, and record makers in tearing down rather than building up.

Since emancipation no colored man has attracted the attention of the world, commanded the money of philanthropists, been honored and respected at home and abroad in the same degree as Dr. Booker T. Washington, and it is because he is engaged in a work that is benefitting humanity.

He has built up at Tuskegee, Ala., a city upon a barren waste. Is at the head of a great Industrial Institution of his own creation that has sent out thousands of graduates. Is actively engaged in the preparation of young men and women for the activities of life, and has indelibly impressed his personality upon the times. His is a grand work by a great man.

Now comes Mr. Edward Morris of Chicago, with a lecture before the Bethel Literary and Historical Society on "Shams." Skillful as a rhetorician, apt in anecdotes, adept in illustration and with the impressive and convincing manner of a well-trained and thoroughly equipped lawyer. Having practised law for a number of years in the "Windy City" his knowledge of "Shams" is extensive, but it has so impaired his confidence in men and warped his judgment, as to make him skeptical and agnostic.

His address indicated that he believed in nothing human or divine unless irrefutable proof could be produced to convince him of his error. He seems a persistent seeker after the rift in the lute. Thespeck on the apple, the slightest and most insignificant flaw that a vivid imagination could magnify into a glaring imperfection.

His audience was entertained with a generous display of verbal pyrotechnics, designating Mr. Booker Washington as a modern Moses, to prepare them for an X-Ray Exhibition of the "Mistakes of Moses" in imi-

tation of Ingersoll's irreverent lecture on the ancient law-giver.

Mr. Morris then constituted himself a grand jury and brought in an indictment against Mr. Washington consisting of four counts:

1st. That the defendant in a book written by him stated that the Negro was inferior in capacity to the whites.

2d. That he spoke in ridicule of having seen a Negro boy in a log cabin studying a French grammar.

3d. That he asserted that some colored girls up to sixteen years of age had more use for a tooth brush than a piano.

4th. That he was in a measure responsible for lynchings.

After empaneling his hearers as a jury, Mr. Morris next assumed the role of Prosecutor and proceeded to prove these charges. Then putting on his judicial robes he instructed the jury as to the law and the evidence in the case, and concluded with: "Now, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I have shown you so clearly the guilt of the accused that you will bring in a verdict of guilty, without leaving your seats."

At this juncture one of the anti-Washington claquers appointed himself Foreman of the jury and moved that Mr. Morris' conclusions be made the verdict of the colored people of the District of Columbia. The jury was so dazed and amazed at the audacity and mendacity of this exhibition of legal legerdemain that they were about to allow themselves to go on record as particeps criminis in a pre arranged coup, when a stay of proceedings was secured, and the defendant given a fair and impartial trial.

The charges were examined into and it was found: 1st. As a mass the Negroes have not the capacity of the whites; that the latter have been brain culturing for hundreds of years, while the Negroes have been land culturing; that the door of opportunity has been open to one and closed to the other; that the environment of prejudice and discrimination has retarded the progress of the blacks; that while their advance during forty years of freedom has been phenomenal, they must acquire mental and material advantages before they can hope to be placed on a plane of equality with the greatest race the world has known. 2d. That the black boy in the log cabin had more use for an English than a French grammar. 3d. That the use of the tooth brush is the doctrine of cleanliness next to Godliness, that the race needs to be schooled in lessons of sanitation to reduce the terrible mortality that exists, especially among children. 4th. That the charge as to the responsibility for lynching was too frivolous and absurd to be given consideration.

Defeat has frequently been turned into victory by the prompt and aggressive action of a quick and ready thinker, who grasping a situation prevents what might otherwise have been a complete rout by the exercise of brains and judgment. That Mr. Morris had a majority of the jury with him is apparent—the first speaker who endeavored to defend Mr. Washington was roundly hissed, and it was necessary for the President of the Society to make an appeal for fair play. It was

then that Governor P. B. S. Pinchback, a man with the courage to face any situation, and who was never known to "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift might follow fawning," with the characteristic fire and earnestness that mark his public utterances, swept aside the impression made by Mr. Morris, met logically and with consummate skill the charges preferred, convinced his hearers that that grand work done by Mr. Washington for his race entitled him to their gratitude, encouragement and support, rather than condemnation. The applause that greeted his impassioned appeal was loud and prolonged, and was a worthy compliment to a grand old man who has always been earnest, honest and outspoken in the cause of his people. He had turned the tide. Friends of Mr. Washington, under the inspiration of the Governor's leadership, followed up the advantage. Mr. Morris' forces were scattered and captured, and the intelligent jury brought in a verdict of "not guilty as charged."

METROPOLITAN A. M. E. CHURCH NOTES.

Dr. Scott's reputation as a revivalist is becoming general. At Howard University a meeting was held last Monday evening and ten students made a start for the Kingdom. In Baltimore, at the largest mass meeting ever held for the young men by the Y. M. C. A. 25 came forward for prayers and eight were converted. He feels and emphasizes the fact that "the business of the church is to save souls."

The W. M. M. S. working in unison with the King's Daughters has responded several times to the calls for food, fuel and clothing. Mrs. Scott and Mrs. Fannie Simms may be depended upon when appealed to for aid. The C. E. Society is preparing a very entertaining program for Allen's Day, February 14. This department of the church under the direct supervision of the Young people, is doing good work for the Master.

The Sabbath School teachers were treated royally Friday night, by the superintendent, Dr. Wm. Connor. Wishing to bring about a closer social feeling among the teachers, the usual Friday business meeting was called at the Drs' residence and the friendly relations were made doubly strong by the refreshments that followed the business part. We'd like to be real social again.

The Woman's Day feels that they've been working with a woman's will to help the church socially, spiritually and temporally. Able addresses have been able to lend a hand in many a place that would otherwise have passed unnoticed. Sunday, January 24th, at 4 p. m. Mrs. A. J. Cooper of the M St. High School will speak for the Woman's Day. The invitation to hear her is general and we hope the many friends of M. A. M. E. church will feel that they are welcome to come and share with use this practical, literary feast, we feel sure Mrs. Cooper has prepared for us.

The well known and popular Amphions are out with a card announcing their annual concert and reception, Feb. 15th, is the date and Grand Army Hall is the place.

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